

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO AMEMBASSY LIMA IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5302
WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2443

WHITE HOUSE FOR MAY HOYT

STATE FOR A, ARA, ARA/PAF, AND S/PRS

LIMA PASS ADVANCE PARTY

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1. THE JAMAICAN PRESS (MEDIA) WHILE STILL FREE, IS A REMARKABLE
TAME, "PUSSYCAT" PRESS. THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA, WITH THE EXCEPTION
OF THE INDEPENDENT RADIO NETWORK, RJR, IS STRONGLY INFLUENCED BY
THE GOJ AND, IN EFFECT, DOES WHAT IT IS TOLD. OF THE THREE
PRINCIPAL PAPARS, THE DAILY GLEANER HAS THE WIDEST CIRCULATION AND,
WHILE NOT COMPLETELY UNSYMPATHETIC TO THE GOVERNMENT, FINDS ITSELF
IN FREQUENT EDITORIAL OPPOSITION. THE DAILY NEWS, ESTABLISHED IN
1973 TO SUPPORT THE PNP GOVERNMENT--DOES SUPPORT IT. UNTIL JANUARY
OF THIS YEAR, THAT SUPPORT WAS IN A RELATIVELY OBJECTIVE CONTEXT.
IN JANUARY THE EDITORSHIP WAS GIVEN TO A YOUNG, STRONGLY LEFT-
SOCIALIST (CANUTE JAMES) WHO HAD JUST BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN THE
RADICALIZATION OF THE PRESS ASSOCIATION JAMAICA. THE AFTER-
NOON STAR IS A SLIGHTLY MORE SENSATIONAL, TABLOID, VERSION OF THE
GLEANER. BOTH MAJOR PAPERS PRESENT DIVERSE VIEWPOINTS, MAINLY BY
PRESENTING THE VIEWS OF COLUMNISTS AND COMMENTATORS, BUT THE
GLEANER BIAS TOWARD OPPOSITION VIEWPOINTS (NOT NECESSARILY THE
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OFFICIAL OPPOSITION) AND THE PRO-GOVERNMENT BIAS OF THE DAILY NEWS
ARE OBVIOUS. THE TWO PRINCIPAL WEEKLIES, THE VOICE(JLP-OPPOSITION)
AND PUBLIC OPINION (PNP) REFLECT THE POSITIONS OF THEIR SPONSORS.

2. OF THE MEDIA, RADIO IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL--REACHING 80 PERCENT
OF THE POPULATION (RJR REACHES 80 PERCENT OF THE RADIO AUDIENCE).
JBC-TV (WITH 200,000 SETS-IN-USE) REACHES

A FOURTH OF THE POPULATION.

THE PRINT MEDIA AUDIENCE IS SOMEWHAT LESS THAN A THIRD OF THE RADIO AUDIENCE--BUT INCLUDES ALL THE INFLUENTIALS ON THE ISLAND. THE GLEANER CIRCULATION IS NEARLY FIVE TIMES THAT OF THE DAILY NEWS. COMMENTATORS IN BOTH PAPERS RARELY COMMENT ON INTERNATIONAL EVENTS UNLESS JAMAICA IS IN SOME FASHION AT THE CENTER OF THEIR FOCAS--THE EXCEPTION BEING THE DEVELOPING SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. PRENSA LATINA ARTICLES (THE DAILY NEWS IS A SUBSCRIBER) GET FREQUENT AND HEAVY EXPOSURE ON THE EDITORIAL AND OP-ED PAGES OF THAT PAPER AND THESE ARTICLES ARE NEARLY ALWAYS CRITICAL OF U.S. INITIATIVES.

3. THE DAILY GLEANER AND RJR HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES. SINCE MID-1976, JBC-TV AND RADIO, THE DAILY NEWS AND PUBLIC OPINION, HAVE BEEN, WHEN NOT DOWNRIGHT HOSTILE (FREQUENTLY),

HIGHLY SKEPTICAL OF OUR MOTIVES AND INTENTIONS. WHILE THIS HOSTILITY AND SKEPTICISM HAS DIMINISHED SINCE THE GOVERNMENT'S DISCOVERY THAT IT WAS GOING TO NEED U.S. AND IMF HELP ON A LARGE SCALE TO SURVIVE, IT HAS NOT DISAPPEARED AND BOTH MEDIA HAVE ACQUIRED REPORTERS AND COMMENTATORS IN THE MEANTIME WHOSE LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS "WARMUP" IS SCARCELY CONCEALED. (IF ANY OF THESE ARE LIKELY TO BE PRESS CONFERENCE INTERLOCUTORS, WE WILL PROVIDE EARLY WARNING WHEN WE HAVE SEEN THE GOJ ACCREDITATION LISTS).

4. POSSIBLE PITFALLS: THERE ARE TWO: ONE SPECIFIC ISSUE AND ONE GENERAL ISSUE. SPECIFICALLY, THE PRESS, AND ALL JAMAICA, WILL HAVE AN OVERWHELMING DESIRE TO KNOW THE PROBABLE LEVEL OF CONFIDENTIAL

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OUR AID EFFORTS. WE ARE ALREADY IN SOME DIFFICULTY AS THE RESULT OF A SPECULATIVE STORY IN THE DAILY NEWS (BASED ON A "GOVERNMENT SOURCE" THAT IT WILL BE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$200-\$250 MILLION--THE FULL EXTENT OF THE GOJ'S PRESENT NEED FOR BOP SUPPORT. IF OUR ACTUAL PROGAAM IS TWICE WHAT WE ANTICIPATE, IT WILL STILL LOOK SMALL BESIDE THIS PREDICTION. CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO KEEP THIS SUBJECT IN PERSPECTIVE AND WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF REALITY. THE GENERAL ISSUE INVOLVES A QUESTION LEFT HANGING IN THE WAKE OF PHILIP AGEE'S VISIT LAST OCT. HIS MOST TELLING POINT WAS THAT THE U.S. "COULD NOT AFFORD" TO SEE THE SUCCESS OF A "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST" EXPERIMENT IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE (AS EVIDENCED BY OUR ALLEGED CHILEAN INTERVENTION) AND WOULD CONTINUE, HOWEVER SUBTLY, THE "DESTABILIZATION" OF JAMAICAN SOCIETY. WHILE MRS. CARTER MUST BE PREPARED TO DISABUSE HER AUDIENCE (MUCH WIDER THAN THE RADICAL PRESS) OF THE IDEA OF AN AMERICAN EFFORT AT "DESTABILIZATION", CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN TO AVOID UNDUE ENTHUSIASM FOR JAMAICA'S EXPERIMENT WITH "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM". WHILE THE GOVERNING PNP ACHIEVED A LANDSLIDE VICTORY IN TERMS OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS (47 OUT OF 60),

THE POPULAR VOTE SHOWED PUBLIC OPINION MORE CLOSELY DIVIDED ON THE ISSUE OF THE SOCIALIST EXPERIMENT (PNP-57 PERCENT JLP 43 PERCENT AND THAT MARGIN WAS ACHIEVED IN SOME MEASURE THROUGH MASSIVE ELECTORAL IRREGULARITIES).

5. COMMENT: ANOTHER POTENTIAL PROBLEM ARISES OUT OF QUESTIONS WHICH MAY BE ASKED BY THE U.S. PRESS OF PM MICHAEL MANLEY. MANLEY AND HIS MINISTERS HAVE ISSUED MORE THAN A FEW QUOTABLE QUOTES ON THE U.S., THE CIA, IMPERIALISM, ETC. OVER THE PAST YEAR. SHOULD HE BE ASKED TO JUSTIFY ONE OF THESE REMARKS IN THE CONTEXT OF MRS. CARTER'S VISIT WE WOULD ANTICIPATE A GREAT DEAL OF DISCOMFORT AND EMBARRASMENT FOR ALL CONCERNED. ON THE OTHER HAND MANLEY DANCES WELL AND WE SEE LITTLE WHICH COULD BE DONE TO AVOID THE PROBLEM SHORT OF REDUCING PRESS EXPOSURE TO AN UNACCEPTABLE LEVEL. WITH THIS POSSIBLE EXCEPTION, AND THAT NOTED IN PARA 3, WE EXPECT THE MEDIA TO EXPRESS WARM SUPPORT FOR THE VISIT. THE GLEANER AND RJR WILL BE FOLLOWING THEIR NATURAL INPICATIONS, AND THAT PORTION OF
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THE MEDIA UNDER STRONG GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE WILL BE UNDER "HEAVY MANNERS". THE PM WELCOMES THE VISIT ENTHUSIASTICALLY AND WILL SEE TO ITS SUCCESS.
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